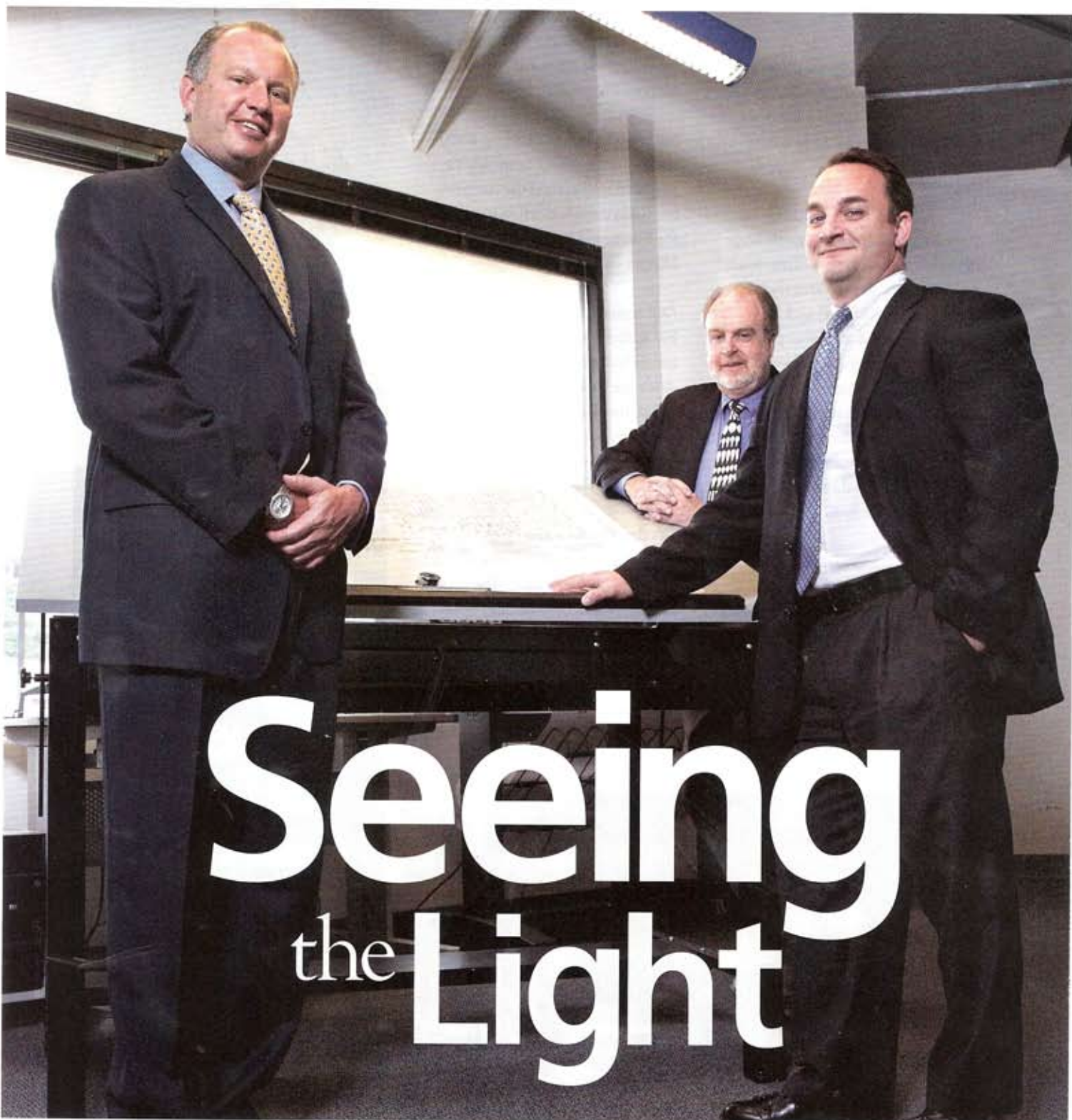




## Wiedenbach-Brown

LED lighting is changing the way retailers, hospitals, hotels, and others are doing business, according to Rodger Cherry.



# Seeing the Light

**S**ustainability is more than just a buzzword in the lighting industry. The growth of LED lighting is going a long way toward increasing the environmental sustainability of the industry and looks to be the biggest lighting innovation in decades.

Wiedenbach-Brown, a lighting distribution business since 1913, is working to stay on the cutting edge of LED technology. "LED, or solid state lighting, is probably the biggest game changer our industry has seen," said Rodger Cherry, president.

LED lighting has led to changes in the industry on many levels, according to Cherry. The changes start at the supply level, where there used to be three major lamp (light bulb) manufacturers.

"New manufacturers who were not directly in the lighting industry are emerging as well. Some of these firms are household names in consumer goods; other companies are start ups and are new to the market," Cherry said. "One thing is for certain, the big three lamp manufacturers now have significantly more competition than they did just a few years ago."

Wiedenbach-Brown is one company with a long history in the industry. It has a national footprint with two distribution centers, one on each coast, and is set up as a national account lighting house.

The company's account base includes major retailers, commercial office buildings, hospitals, fitness centers, grocery chains, and the hospitality industry. As part of its lighting solutions services, WB has an electrical services and lamp division that handles maintenance and lamp replacements.

Although some companies with a long history might let the latest changes pass them by, Cherry said Wiedenbach-Brown came to the quick realization that it would have to stay on top of the changes in the industry to remain a major player. One step the company took was hiring a technology director.

"We now have someone on our staff who spends an extensive amount of time examining and reviewing LED products and asking the tough questions about the claimed performance of these products," said Cherry.

### It costs more, it costs less

As with any new technology, rules and regulation need to catch up with the rapid advances in LED products. "Uniform labeling is central to product comparison, and public education is crucial since standards of measurement between LEDs and traditional lighting sources differ," Cherry said.

The Department of Energy is developing many of those standards and measurements, according to Cherry. One of the challenges the technology director faces is determining whether a product actually performs to the level claimed by the manufacturer.

"We're doing our own internal review because our integrity is at stake," said Cherry. "If the products we promote don't measure up, we're going to have dissatisfied customers, and that's not good for business."

Education is the key when it comes to letting consumers know about the potential energy and cost savings of LED lighting. The company spreads the word through demonstrating various lighting options and calculating the potential savings of switching to LED lighting.





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"With the LED replacement lamp, you could be going from a 75 watt par lamp down to 14 or 16 watts in certain applications," Cherry said.

"If you can explain to a CFO that he is going to save \$100,000 per year on energy costs by making these changes and the payback period is going to be less than two years, he is going to move forward with it," said Cherry. "Companies are looking at the bottom line, and energy is a big area where they can save money."

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**CONGRATULATIONS**  
*to Rodger Cherry and Wiedenbach-Brown*

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Saving money is important, but equally important according to Cherry is maintaining the lighting integrity of projects and making sure the spaces are properly lit. "Owners need to be educated to the fact that energy reduction is more than just an opportunity to reduce watts, but an opportunity to reinvent the space as well," he said.

Cherry explained that removing watts from a poorly designed space or from a space whose purpose has changed from the time of the original design may not be the best solution. Reviewing the lighting in the context of the current usage and current design standards may allow the owner to save

energy while improving both the visual impact and the occupants' enjoyment of the space.

Even with today's tough market conditions, Cherry said it is a good time for companies to look at more environmentally sustainable products. "It really is a wonderful time for people involved in construction and building maintenance to take a look at green initiatives," he said. "Today's market conditions are unique, energy cost increases outpace the rate of inflation, interest rates are low, labor rates are negotiable, and equipment costs are relatively stable. Now is a great time for an owner to add a lighting expert to their team. At Wiedenbach-Brown, we have the lighting expertise and the business knowledge to assist our clients in meeting their goals." ■

—Adam Swift

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